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SECURITY INFORMATION

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COUNTRY East Germany

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SUBJECT    Developments at Eisenhuttenkombinat West, Calbe/  
Saale

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1. The low cupola furnaces at Calbe continue to cause dissatisfaction. Upon instructions from Walter Ulbricht, a special commission was set up to investigate the working of the furnaces. As a result of the report submitted by the commission in June, Ulbricht has now issued special instructions that the first three furnaces must be operating satisfactorily before the end of August.
2. The main obstacle to satisfactory working heretofore had been the failure of East German briquette and coking plants to develop a briquette coke capable of withstanding the furnace charges in use at Calbe. Although experiments have been in progress at Lauchhammer and Maximilianshütte, Unterwellenborn, to develop a satisfactory coke made from brown coal, brown coal briquettes, and brown coal fine grain briquettes, these have not yet proved successful.
3. Lauchhammer has also been experimenting with a metallurgical coke, produced by the carbonization at low temperatures of briquettes made from saliferous coal to which has been added an inorganic flux supplied from Stassfurt <sup>1</sup>. Experiments to date have met with no success since the coke obtained has been found difficult to kindle and causes considerable damage to the exhaust pipes.
4. A further series of experiments was undertaken with briquettes made from first quality brown coal, plus inorganic flux, and subjected to an extremely rapid cooling process. During tests carried out in the experimental low cupola furnace at Unterwellenborn, it was found that, although the coke obtained was of exceptional hardness, the pig iron produced was too brittle for further processing and was discovered on remelting to have a light coating of slag.
5. As a result of the continual breakdowns in furnace I, it was decided in June 1952 to reconstruct it as a normal blast furnace. The possibility of replacing the existing furnace by an entirely new furnace of conventional design has also

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been discussed. The iron produced so far is of such poor quality that it can only be used for working up into slag cement.

6. Although furnace II has suffered relatively few breakdowns, the iron produced has too high a manganese and sulphur content and is not acceptable to East German steel plants. This furnace will also be redesigned as will furnace III and the remaining furnaces to be built at Calbe.
7. Difficulties have also been encountered with the fire clay (type A 01), used in the dampers, which is obtained from Czechoslovakia, and which is unable to withstand temperatures of more than 2,000 degrees. East Germany is now negotiating [redacted] for the purchase of fire clay (type A00) of [redacted]. Attempts are also being made to obtain new Theisen washers, as those already installed are outmoded, and continually break down.
8. A second chimney 55 meters in height has now been completed and the foundations of the power station are also complete. Work has started on the foundations for substation two, for furnaces VI to X.

1. [redacted] Comment: Not further identified.

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